

Understanding Infrastructure Development: The African Case

Mahmoud Mahmoud

Planned infrastructure development, including over 25 million kilometers of new roads, of which 90% will be built in developing regions between now and 2050, are expected to have major implications for conservation and development policy on a pan-African scale. At the same time, there is little empirical understanding of ecosystem and land-use changes induced by road development across Africa. Specifically, the dynamic ecological impacts of roads on flora, fauna, and the functioning of the various ecosystems, from tropical and savanna forests to savanna grasslands and semi-arid areas, are not sufficiently known. The impacts on the critical services that these ecosystems provide for the African population are also yet to be determined.